



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
-----------------	-------------	----------------------	---------------------	------------------

10/686,345

10/14/2003

Dale W. Malik

030183_7785-601

7192

53844 7590 02/28/2011

AT&T Legal Department - AS

Attn: Patent Docketing

Room 2A-207

One AT&T Way

Bedminster, NJ 07921

EXAMINER

KIM, HEE SOO

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2457

MAIL DATE

DELIVERY MODE

02/28/2011

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/686,345	Applicant(s) MALIK ET AL.	
	Examiner HEE SOO KIM	Art Unit 2457	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 2/15/11.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-12,14 and 16-22 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-12,14 and 16-22 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

This action is responsive to RCE filed on February 15th, 2011.

Claims 1~12, 14, and 16~22 are pending examination.

Response to Amendment

Claims 1, 3, and 18 have been amended.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1~12, 14, and 16~22 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection. Examiner further responds to Applicant's arguments made in regards to limitations previously added.

In response to Applicant's arguments (Pg. 10, ¶1) that Srivastava does not disclose that both email information and IM information for a particular user is stored in a single database thereby to facilitate integration between email and IM systems and to provide a central repository for both email information and IM information, and that all group email messages from all users are stored in a single email store which is part of the single database. Examiner respectfully disagree because Appelman taught a IM host complex 590 includes a subscriber profile server 5912 connected to a database 5914 for storing large amounts of subscriber profile data may be used to enter, retrieve, edit, manipulate, or otherwise process subscriber profile data. The profile server also may communicate with other servers in the OSP host complex 580 (email services) to share subscriber profile data with other services (Col. 10, Ln. 30~56). Furthermore, Srivastava taught each of the group email messages is stored at a common location, thereby providing access, to each member of the predefined group, to each of group

email messages (Col. 4, Ln. 64~65, "messages addressed to the shared folder 408 go into a private folder associated with each user", i.e. the shared folder; Col. 4, Ln. 65~Col. 5, Ln. 8 further explains that only one copy is stored in the group email folder). Therefore, the combination of Appelman and Srivastava provides a profile server containing profile data that are shared between the IM and Email services to thereby facilitate integration between both services seamlessly.

As such, the rejection is sustained below:

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

Claims 1~12, 14, and 17~22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Appelman et al. hereinafter Appelman (U.S 6,912,564) in view of Hickey et al. hereinafter Hickey (U.S 2002/0087646) and Gatz et al. hereinafter Gatz (U.S 2002/0049806) and Srivastava et al. hereinafter Srivastava (U.S 6,374,292) further in view of Stark et al. hereinafter Stark (U.S 2003/0233420).

Regarding Claim 1,

Appelman taught a communication method comprising the steps of:

providing a user profile having a collection of properties related to a user email folder, the user profile further having a collection of properties related to a user instant messaging (IM) account (Col. 10, Ln. 30~56, subscriber profile data of IM host complex 590; Profile server 5912 may communicate with servers in the OSP host complex 580 to share profile data; Col. 5, Ln. 40~45, OSP host complex supports email services,

discussion groups, and other services; Col. 12, Ln. 53~65, folder attributes set by subscriber of the host system);

defining properties of the user email folder using the user profile (Col. 12, Ln. 53~65); and

defining properties of the user IM account using the user profile (Col. 10, Ln. 30~40); and

providing at least one interface for displaying the user profile, including the defined properties of the user email folder and the defined properties of the user IM account (Col. 10, Ln. 30~40, profile server is used to enter, retrieve, edit, manipulate or process subscriber profile data implying an interface is displayed to the user),

wherein both email information and IM information for a particular user is stored in a single database thereby to facilitate integration between email and IM systems and to provide a central repository for both email information and IM information (Col. 8, Ln. 63~66, Login server 570 enables simultaneous access to the OSP complex 580 and the IM host complex 590 implying both email and IM information such as user ID and password are stored in a single server or database thereby facilitating the integration between OSP complex 580 (email services) and the IM host complex 590).

While Appelman taught an interface for users being able to set their email and instant messaging preferences in the subscription profile data, Appelman did not explicitly teach:

wherein the interface is further configured to provide at least one group email message corresponding to at least one group email folder, the group email folder

Art Unit: 2457

configured such that members of a group associated with the group email folder have access to the group email message, wherein the interface is further configured to provide an option to provide at least one user-specific email, the user specific email being different than the group email message, and wherein the group email message includes an access indicator for each member of the group, the access indicator configured to indicate which members of the group have accessed the group email message.

In an analogous art, Hickey taught a system and method for providing a group electronic mailbox that enables multiple users to work collaboratively and/or simultaneously with one or more communications received in the mail box (see Abstract), in which each electronic communication includes a status indicator that conveys the status regarding the associated one or more electronic mails to the members of the group, in which the status information includes read information, and also in which such status changes in response to acts of each member of the group. The system of Hickey provides status information including read information, acted upon information, and replied information [¶43]. Hickey further taught status indicators "showing the current status (e.g., New, Read, Answered, Moved, etc.) of an email message in the group mailbox". Hickey further taught that such status indicators allow the members of the group to obtain the status to messages within the group email folder regarding the other members of the group [¶79].

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made, to combine the "references" of Hickey (as well as the

other relied upon portions of Hickey) into the teachings of Appelman, in order to indicate to each member of the group, through the use of the references, that a group message is stored in the group email folder and further allow members of the group to know whether or not such emails have been reviewed, acted upon, or replied to thereby allowing the members to selectively operate on such electronic communications (Hickey: [¶11]) as well as notifying members or users of the group of any changes in status information of the received electronic communications, so that when a member of the group takes action on an received email, other members of the group can see what has been done (Hickey: [¶16]).

The combination of Appelman and Hickey did not explicitly state wherein a user type associated with a user is assigned, the user type being part of the group comprising an administrator, a guest, and a user having limited privileges and access.

Gatz taught an access server controls use of services in an account based access server and includes a database of users, a data structure associating users identified as parents with parent accounts, users identified as children with child accounts (abstract). More specifically, user account information 70 may be stored in the user account information database 220 of Fig. 2. Each parent accounts (“administrator”) 72 and 76 include each of the parents' data, settings, preferences, etc. Each of the child accounts (“user having limited privileges and access”) 74 and 78 include each of the children's data, settings, preferences, etc., as determined by the respective parent and as well as each of the children [¶57; Fig. 5]. Hence, by using the account control system, a parent can control the access and settings of the user of the child account as

well as control selected preference settings of the child account. For example, the parent can grant permission for the child to use the online services provided with the child account, control the information the child shares with others using the online services and can maintain and monitor the child account on an ongoing basis [¶58; ¶81; Fig. 17].

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to incorporate, assigning a user type associated with a user is assigned, the user type being part of the group comprising an administrator, a guest, and a user having limited privileges and access, in order to obtain the predictable result of prohibiting inappropriate communication with users or controlled public resources over the Internet [Gatz: ¶11], thereby providing secure communication between users in a network.

The combination of Appelman, Hickey, and Gatz did not explicitly state wherein all group email messages from all users are stored in a single email store which is part of the single database.

In an analogous art, Srivastava disclosed a shared email server that includes private folders for personal use as well as group folders shared among members of a group (Col. 4, Ln. 51~65), and each of the group email messages is stored at a common location, thereby providing access, to each member of the predefined group, to each of group email messages (Col. 4, Ln. 64~65, "messages addressed to the shared folder 408 go into a private folder associated with each user", i.e. the shared folder; Col.

4, Ln. 65~Col. 5, Ln. 8 further explains that only one copy is stored in the group email folder).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made, to combine the "references" of Hickey (as well as the other relied upon portions of Hickey) into the combination teachings of Appelman, Hickey, and Gatz, in order to indicate to each member of the group, through the use of the references, that a group message is stored in the group email folder (in order to save disk space rather than having multiple copies of the same email message throughout the system), in order to provide users with a system that functions just like a standard email system, providing a more practical-type system with ease of use.

The combination of Appelman, Hickey, Gatz, and Srivastava did not explicitly state wherein the access indicator comprises an extensible markup language tag that is operative to be set or reset to indicate that a member of the group has or has not accessed the group email message.

Stark taught messages contain embedded XML tags that describe certain attributes of that message [¶35]. As such, it can be deduced that XML tags that describe attributes of a message can be a tag which bolds text of a message header to indicate that the message is new or unchecked. One of ordinary skill in the art knows that email systems provide an indicator of new messages by bolding the subject header of the email (i.e. Microsoft Outlook).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made, to combine the "references" of Stark (as well as the other

relied upon portions of Stark) into the combination teachings of Appelman, Hickey, Gatz, and Srivastava so that the access indicator comprises an extensible markup language (XML) tag that is operative to be set or reset to indicate that a member of the group has or has not accessed the group email message in order to provide users with a system that makes it easier to manage, receive, route, and interact with electronic messages [Stark: ¶41].

Regarding Claim 2,

Appelman taught the step of providing the user profiles comprises:

assigning a user profile to a user (Col. 10, Ln. 30~56);

permitting the user assigned to the user profile to have access to the at least one user email folder associated with the user profile (Col. 10, Ln. 30~56, Col. 12, Ln. 53~65); and

While Appelman taught an interface for users being able to set their email and instant messaging preferences in the subscription profile data, Appelman did not explicitly teach permitting the user assigned to the user profile to have access to the group email folder.

In an analogous art, Hickey taught a system and method for providing a group electronic mailbox that enables multiple users to work collaboratively and/or simultaneously with one or more communications received in the mail box (see Abstract), and in addition to each user typically having an individual mailbox as well as access to the group electronic mailbox [¶36].

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made, to combine the "references" of Hickey (as well as the

other relied upon portions of Hickey) into the teachings of Appelman, in order to indicate to each member of the group, through the use of the references, that a group message is stored in the group email folder. See motivation above.

Regarding Claim 3,

Appelman taught a communication method comprising the steps of:

assigning a user profile to a user (Col. 10, Ln. 30~56);

associating a user email folder with the user profile (Col. 12, Ln. 53~65); and

associating a user instant messaging (IM) account with the user profile (Col. 10, Ln. 30~56); and

defining properties associated with the user IM account as a function of the user profile (Col. 10, Ln. 30~40);

While Appelman taught an interface for users being able to set their email and instant messaging preferences in the subscription profile data, Appelman did not explicitly teach:

providing at least one interface for displaying the user profile, including the defined properties of the user email folder and the defined properties of the user IM account,

wherein both email information and IM information for a particular user is stored in a single database thereby to facilitate integration between email and IM systems and to provide a central repository for both email information and IM information (Col. 8, Ln. 63~66, Login server 570 enables simultaneous access to the OSP complex 580 and the IM host complex 590 implying both email and IM information such as user ID and

password are stored in a single server or database thereby facilitating the integration between OSP complex 580 (email services) and the IM host complex 590).

While Appelman taught an interface for users being able to set their email and instant messaging preferences in the subscription profile data, Appelman did not explicitly teach:

wherein the interface is further configured to provide at least one group email message corresponding to at least one group email folder, the group email folder configured such that members of a group associated with the group email folder have access to the group email message, wherein the interface is further configured to provide an option to provide at least one user-specific email, the user specific email being different than the group email message, and wherein the group email message includes an access indicator for each member of the group, the access indicator configured to indicate which members of the group have accessed the group email message.

In an analogous art, Hickey taught a system and method for providing a group electronic mailbox that enables multiple users to work collaboratively and/or simultaneously with one or more communications received in the mail box (see Abstract), in which each electronic communication includes a status indicator that conveys the status regarding the associated one or more electronic mails to the members of the group, in which the status information includes read information, and also in which such status changes in response to acts of each member of the group. The system of Hickey provides status information including read information, acted

upon information, and replied information [¶43]. Hickey further taught status indicators "showing the current status (e.g., New, Read, Answered, Moved, etc.) of an email message in the group mailbox". Hickey further taught that such status indicators allow the members of the group to obtain the status to messages within the group email folder regarding the other members of the group [¶79].

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made, to combine the "references" of Hickey (as well as the other relied upon portions of Hickey) into the teachings of Appelman, in order to indicate to each member of the group, through the use of the references, that a group message is stored in the group email folder and further allow members of the group to know whether or not such emails have been reviewed, acted upon, or replied to thereby allowing the members to selectively operate on such electronic communications (Hickey: [¶11]) as well as notifying members or users of the group of any changes in status information of the received electronic communications, so that when a member of the group takes action on an received email, other members of the group can see what has been done (Hickey: [¶16]).

The combination of Appelman and Hickey did not explicitly state wherein a user type associated with a user is assigned, the user type being part of the group comprising an administrator, a guest, and a user having limited privileges and access.

Gatz taught an access server controls use of services in an account based access server and includes a database of users, a data structure associating users identified as parents with parent accounts, users identified as children with child

accounts (abstract). More specifically, user account information 70 may be stored in the user account information database 220 of Fig. 2. Each parent accounts (“administrator”) 72 and 76 include each of the parents' data, settings, preferences, etc. Each of the child accounts (“user having limited privileges and access”) 74 and 78 include each of the children's data, settings, preferences, etc., as determined by the respective parent and as well as each of the children [¶57; Fig. 5]. Hence, by using the account control system, a parent can control the access and settings of the user of the child account as well as control selected preference settings of the child account. For example, the parent can grant permission for the child to use the online services provided with the child account, control the information the child shares with others using the online services and can maintain and monitor the child account on an ongoing basis [¶58; ¶81; Fig. 17].

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to incorporate, assigning a user type associated with a user is assigned, the user type being part of the group comprising an administrator, a guest, and a user having limited privileges and access, in order to obtain the predictable result of prohibiting inappropriate communication with users or controlled public resources over the Internet [Gatz: ¶11], thereby providing secure communication between users in a network.

The combination of Appelman, Hickey, and Gatz did not explicitly state wherein all group email messages from all users are stored in a single email store which is part of the single database.

In an analogous art, Srivastava disclosed a shared email server that includes private folders for personal use as well as group folders shared among members of a group (Col. 4, Ln. 51~65), and each of the group email messages is stored at a common location, thereby providing access, to each member of the predefined group, to each of group email messages (Col. 4, Ln. 64~65, "messages addressed to the shared folder 408 go into a private folder associated with each user", i.e. the shared folder; Col. 4, Ln. 65~Col. 5, Ln. 8 further explains that only one copy is stored in the group email folder).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made, to combine the "references" of Hickey (as well as the other relied upon portions of Hickey) into the combination teachings of Appelman, Hickey, and Gatz, in order to indicate to each member of the group, through the use of the references, that a group message is stored in the group email folder (in order to save disk space rather than having multiple copies of the same email message throughout the system), in order to provide users with a system that functions just like a standard email system, providing a more practical-type system with ease of use.

Stark taught messages contain embedded XML tags that describe certain attributes of that message [¶35]. As such, the XML tags that describe attributes of a message can be a bold tag which bolds any text after this tag. One of ordinary skill in the art knows that email systems provide an indicator of new messages by bolding the subject header of the email (i.e. Microsoft Outlook). In order to bold or unbold

(suggesting the message has been accessed) is defining an XML bold tag as an attribute of that message.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made, to combine the "references" of Stark (as well as the other relied upon portions of Stark) into the combination teachings of Appelman, Hickey, Gatz, and Srivastava so that the access indicator comprises an extensible markup language (XML) tag that is operative to be set or reset to indicate that a member of the group has or has not accessed the group email message in order to provide users with a system that makes it easier to manage, receive, route, and interact with electronic messages [Stark: ¶41].

Regarding Claim 4,

Appelman taught further comprising:

defining properties associated with the user email folder as a function of the user profile (Col. 12, Ln. 53~65).

Regarding Claim 5,

Appelman taught defining properties associated with the user email folder comprises:

assigning a user name associated with the user (Col. 8, Ln. 59~66); and

assigning a password associated with the user name (Col. 8, Ln. 59~66).

Regarding Claim 6,

The combination of Appelman and Hickey taught substantially all the limitations of claim 4 however, failed to specifically teach wherein defining properties associated with the user email folder comprises: assigning a user type associated with the user.

Gatz taught an access server controls use of services in an account based access server and includes a database of users, a data structure associating users identified as parents with parent accounts, users identified as children with child accounts (abstract). More specifically, user account information 70 may be stored in the user account information database 220 of Fig. 2. Each parent accounts (“administrator”) 72 and 76 include each of the parents' data, settings, preferences, etc. Each of the child accounts (“user having limited privileges and access”) 74 and 78 include each of the children's data, settings, preferences, etc., as determined by the respective parent and as well as each of the children [¶57; Fig. 5]. Hence, by using the account control system, a parent can control the access and settings of the user of the child account as well as control selected preference settings of the child account. For example, the parent can grant permission for the child to use the online services provided with the child account, control the information the child shares with others using the online services and can maintain and monitor the child account on an ongoing basis [¶58; ¶81; Fig. 17].

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to incorporate, assigning a user type associated with a user is assigned, the user type being part of the group comprising an administrator, a guest, and a user having limited privileges and access. See motivation of claim 3.

Regarding Claim 7,

Appelman taught defining properties associated with the user email folder comprises:

assigning a collection of email folders to the user (Col. 11, Ln. 45~47).

Art Unit: 2457

Regarding Claim 8,

Appelman taught assigning the collection of email folders to the user comprises:

storing post office protocol 3 (POP3) server information for each email folder in the collection of email folders (Col. 5, Ln. 47~52).

Regarding Claim 9,

Appelman taught assigning the collection of email folders to the user comprises:

storing simple mail transfer protocol (SMTP) server information for each email folder in the collection of email folders (Col. 5, Ln. 47~52).

Regarding Claim 10,

Appelman taught properties associated with the user email folder comprises:

storing email filter settings (Col. 12, Ln. 53~65).

Regarding Claim 11,

Appelman taught defining properties associated with the user email folder comprises storing an address book associated with the user (Col. 14, Ln. 15~23).

Regarding Claim 12,

Appelman taught storing the address book associated with the user comprises assigning address book settings to the address book (Col. 14, Ln. 15~23).

Regarding Claim 14,

Appelman taught defining properties associated with the user IM account comprises:

assigning a user name associated with the user (Col. 8, Ln. 59~66); and

assigning a password associated with the user name (Col. 8, Ln. 59~66).

Regarding Claim 17,

Appelman taught storing a contact list associated with the user (Col. 10, Ln. 30~40).

Regarding Claim 18,

Appelman taught a communication system comprising:

an Internet Service Provider (ISP) configured to provide (Col. 5, Ln. 29~30):

a user profile (Col. 10, Ln. 30~56);

a user email folder associated with the user profile (Col. 12, Ln. 53~65);

and

a user instant messaging (IM) account associated with the user profile
Col. 10, Ln. 30~56); and

an interface for displaying the user profile, including the defined properties of the user email folder and the defined properties of the user IM account (Col. 10, Ln. 30~40, profile server is used to enter, retrieve, edit, manipulate or process subscriber profile data implying an interface is displayed to the user).

wherein both email information and IM information for a particular user is stored in a single database thereby to facilitate integration between email and IM systems and to provide a central repository for both email information and IM information (Col. 8, Ln. 63~66, Login server 570 enables simultaneous access to the OSP complex 580 and the IM host complex 590 implying both email and IM information such as user ID and password are stored in a single server or database thereby facilitating the integration between OSP complex 580 (email services) and the IM host complex 590).

While Appelman taught an interface for users being able to set their email and instant messaging preferences in the subscription profile data, Appelman did not explicitly teach:

wherein the interface is further configured to provide at least one group email message corresponding to at least one group email folder, the group email folder configured such that members of a group associated with the group email folder have access to the group email message, wherein the interface is further configured to provide an option to provide at least one user-specific email, the user specific email being different than the group email message, and wherein the group email message includes an access indicator for each member of the group, the access indicator configured to indicate which members of the group have accessed the group email message.

In an analogous art, Hickey taught a system and method for providing a group electronic mailbox that enables multiple users to work collaboratively and/or simultaneously with one or more communications received in the mail box (see Abstract), in which each electronic communication includes a status indicator that conveys the status regarding the associated one or more electronic mails to the members of the group, in which the status information includes read information, and also in which such status changes in response to acts of each member of the group. The system of Hickey provides status information including read information, acted upon information, and replied information [¶43]. Hickey further taught status indicators "showing the current status (e.g., New, Read, Answered, Moved, etc.) of an email message in the group mailbox". Hickey further taught that such status indicators allow the members of the group to obtain the status to messages within the group email folder regarding the other members of the group [¶79].

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made, to combine the "references" of Hickey (as well as the other relied upon portions of Hickey) into the teachings of Appelman, in order to indicate to each member of the group, through the use of the references, that a group message is stored in the group email folder and further allow members of the group to know whether or not such emails have been reviewed, acted upon, or replied to thereby allowing the members to selectively operate on such electronic communications (Hickey: [¶11]) as well as notifying members or users of the group of any changes in status information of the received electronic communications, so that when a member of the group takes action on an received email, other members of the group can see what has been done (Hickey: [¶16]).

The combination of Appelman and Hickey did not explicitly state wherein a user type associated with a user is assigned, the user type being part of the group comprising an administrator, a guest, and a user having limited privileges and access.

Gatz taught an access server controls use of services in an account based access server and includes a database of users, a data structure associating users identified as parents with parent accounts, users identified as children with child accounts (abstract). More specifically, user account information 70 may be stored in the user account information database 220 of Fig. 2. Each parent accounts ("administrator") 72 and 76 include each of the parents' data, settings, preferences, etc. Each of the child accounts ("user having limited privileges and access") 74 and 78 include each of the children's data, settings, preferences, etc., as determined by the respective parent and

as well as each of the children [¶57; Fig. 5]. Hence, by using the account control system, a parent can control the access and settings of the user of the child account as well as control selected preference settings of the child account. For example, the parent can grant permission for the child to use the online services provided with the child account, control the information the child shares with others using the online services and can maintain and monitor the child account on an ongoing basis [¶58; ¶81; Fig. 17].

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to incorporate, assigning a user type associated with a user is assigned, the user type being part of the group comprising an administrator, a guest, and a user having limited privileges and access, in order to obtain the predictable result of prohibiting inappropriate communication with users or controlled public resources over the Internet [Gatz: ¶11], thereby providing secure communication between users in a network.

The combination of Appelman, Hickey, and Gatz did not explicitly state wherein all group email messages from all users are stored in a single email store which is part of the single database.

In an analogous art, Srivastava disclosed a shared email server that includes private folders for personal use as well as group folders shared among members of a group (Col. 4, Ln. 51~65), and each of the group email messages is stored at a common location, thereby providing access, to each member of the predefined group, to each of group email messages (Col. 4, Ln. 64~65, "messages addressed to the shared

folder 408 go into a private folder associated with each user", i.e. the shared folder; Col. 4, Ln. 65~Col. 5, Ln. 8 further explains that only one copy is stored in the group email folder).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made, to combine the "references" of Hickey (as well as the other relied upon portions of Hickey) into the combination teachings of Appelman, Hickey, and Gatz, in order to indicate to each member of the group, through the use of the references, that a group message is stored in the group email folder (in order to save disk space rather than having multiple copies of the same email message throughout the system), in order to provide users with a system that functions just like a standard email system, providing a more practical-type system with ease of use.

Stark taught messages contain embedded XML tags that describe certain attributes of that message [¶35]. As such, the XML tags that describe attributes of a message can be a bold tag which bolds any text after this tag. One of ordinary skill in the art knows that email systems provide an indicator of new messages by bolding the subject header of the email (i.e. Microsoft Outlook). In order to bold or unbold (suggesting the message has been accessed) is defining an XML bold tag as an attribute of that message.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made, to combine the "references" of Stark (as well as the other relied upon portions of Stark) into the combination teachings of Appelman, Hickey, Gatz, and Srivastava so that the access indicator comprises an extensible markup

language (XML) tag that is operative to be set or reset to indicate that a member of the group has or has not accessed the group email message in order to provide users with a system that makes it easier to manage, receive, route, and interact with electronic messages [Stark: ¶41].

Regarding Claim 19,
Appelman taught the user profile is configured to define properties associated with the user email folder (Col. 12, Ln. 53~65).

Regarding Claim 20,
Appelman taught the properties associated with the user email folder include at least an email filter setting (Col. 12, Ln. 53~65).

Regarding Claim 21,
Appelman taught the user profile is configured to define properties associated with the user IM account (Col. 10, Ln. 30~40).

Regarding Claim 22,
Appelman taught the properties associated with the user IM account include at least a contact list (Col. 10, Ln. 30~40).

Claims 7 and 16 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Appelman in view of Hickey and further in view of 'Official Notice'.

Regarding Claim 16,
Appelman taught substantially all the limitations of claim 3 however, failed to specifically teach defining properties associated with the user IM account comprises: assigning a collection of IM accounts to the user.

Examiner takes 'Official Notice' (Wendorfer, 2004/0017396, see ¶43) that it was well-known to one of ordinary skill in the art for assigning a collection of IM accounts to

the user as it would allow a user in one IM application to communicate with other users using different IM applications without the need to install separate IM applications.

Conclusion

Examiner's Note: Examiner has cited particular columns and line numbers in the references applied to the claims above for the convenience of the applicant. Although the specified citations are representative of the teachings of the art and are applied to specific limitations within the individual claim, other passages and figures may apply as well. It is respectfully requested from the applicant in preparing responses, to fully consider the references in entirety as potentially teaching all or part of the claimed invention, as well as the context of the passage as taught by the prior art or disclosed by the Examiner.

In the case of amending the claimed invention, Applicant is respectfully requested to indicate the portion(s) of the specification which dictate(s) the structure relied on for proper interpretation and also to verify and ascertain the metes and bounds of the claimed invention.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to HEE SOO KIM whose telephone number is (571)270-3229. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Thursday 8:00AM - 5:30PM EST.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Ario Etienne can be reached on (571) 272-4001. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Art Unit: 2457

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/H. K./
02/25/11

/ARIO ETIENNE/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 2457